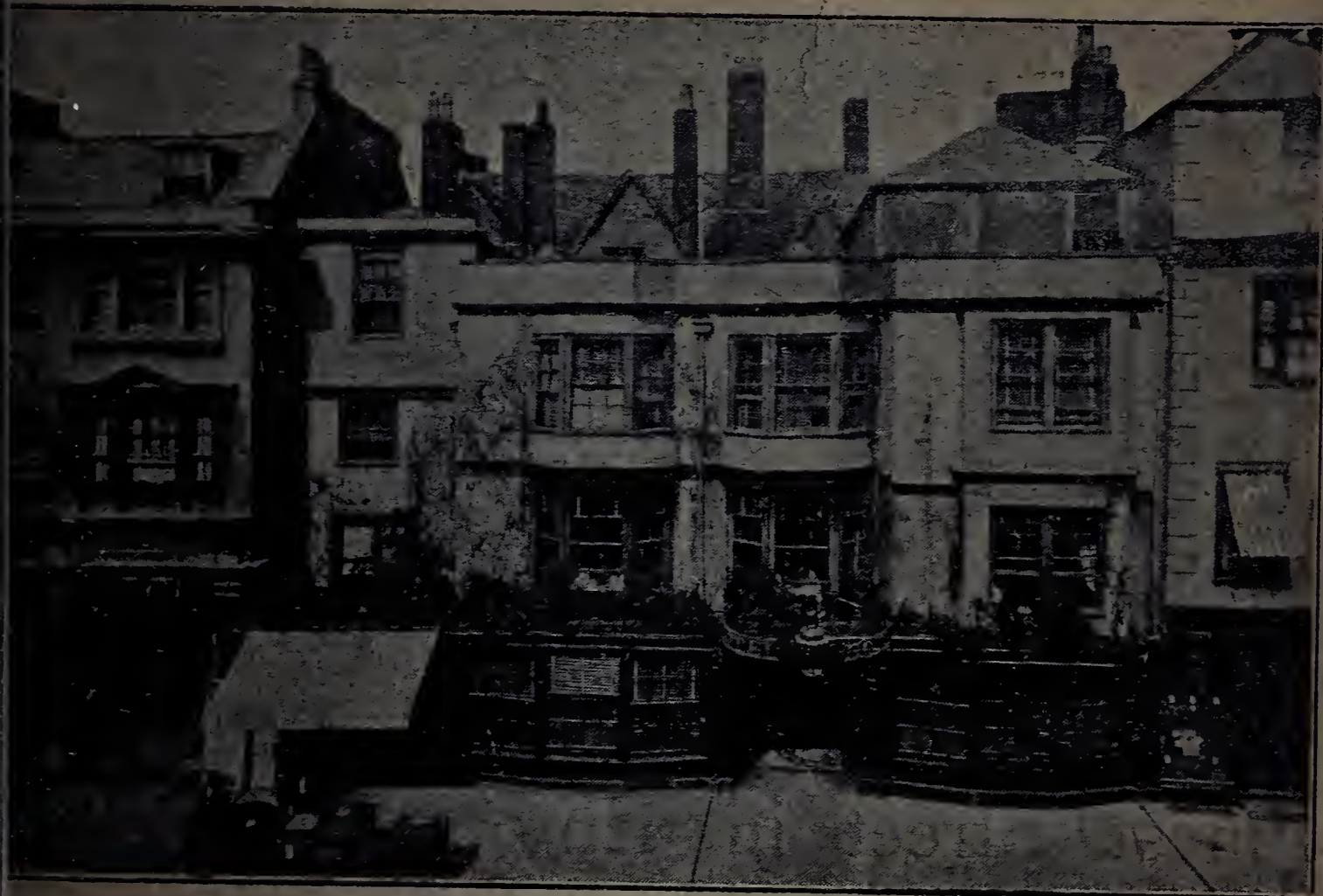




Round about "The Mitre"

AT

OXFORD.



MITRE HOTEL, OXFORD.

"Shall I not take mine ease in mine inn?"—SHAKESPEARE.

Oxford:

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1900.

SEVENTH EDITION.

OXFORD.

✻ ✻ **“MITRE”** ✻ ✻

✻ ✻ **HOTEL.**

Situated in the centre of the
Finest Street in Europe, is one of
the most

Economical First-Class

Hotels in the Kingdom.

Round about the "Mitre"

AT OXFORD.*

*"In this princely land of all that's good and great,
Would Clio seek the most distinguished seat,
Most blest, where all is so sublimely blest,
That with superior grace o'erlooks the rest?
Like a rich gem, in circling gold enshrin'd,
Where Isis' waters wind
Along the sweetest shore
That ever felt fair Culture's hands,
Or Spring's embroidered mantle wore,
Lo! where majestic Oxford stands."*—WARTON.

LAST month, it will be remembered, we wrote of Liverpool—a city of commerce, one of our modern Ninevehs and Babylons; this month we select its civic antithesis, Oxford,—beautiful for situation, famous in history, and foremost in the annals of erudition and culture—

"That faire city, wherein make abode
So many learned imps, that shoot abroad."



OXFORD.

To describe Oxford apart from its antiquities would be like the play of *Hamlet* without the Prince of Denmark. The old city of *Rydychen*

* A revised reprint from THE TOURIST AND TRAVELLER, AND HOTEL REVIEW.

is nothing if it be not historically interesting ; and probably many of its visitors will preferably take up their abode, during their sojourn, at one of its ancient hostelries, and so be consistently antiquarian throughout. Of these caravanseries,—reminiscences of times past,—the oldest and most famous now surviving is

THE “MITRE”

—the Mitre Inn of the old *régime*, the Mitre Hotel of the new. Established in the year 1400, this famous house of entertainment has an unwritten history of its own, rich in the coaching lore of centuries, which would fill a volume. In the old days, long before the iron horse had usurped the supremacy of the stage coach, the “Mitre” was a monarch amongst inns ; and even in later times, when the railway whistle had blown off the road the hundreds of coaches, which in the pre-locomotive days had been the sole and unopposed means of conveyance from one town to another, not a few Oxonian whips handled the ribands for the pure love of the thing : and mine host of “that glorious hostelry, the ‘Mitre,’” considered it quite a pleasure, and a privilege besides, to hand those gay charioteers their “stirrup cups,” as they cracked their “weapons,” and urged forward their four smart animals for a brisk ride to Cheltenham. Then, as now, the “Mitre” was *par excellence* the “Varsity” house. Generation after generation of Oxford men—and, as an Oxford academical generation signifies but four years on the average, this expression means a good few “sets,” some slow, some “hard-reading,” some “rapid,”—make the “Mitre” their convivial head-quarters. No more lively days were experienced by the inmates of this old house than during the period which found our present Prince of Wales, the Marquis of Hastings, His Grace of Hamilton, and a few other jovial souls—fonder, perhaps, of the festive board at the “Mitre” than of *Alma Mater*—holding terms at Oxford.

In those days the “Mitre” was under the control of Mr. Venables, a name held in more than memorable respect by many a score of University men. It has since passed into the hands of a well-known citizen of Oxford, Mr. Charles Foster, who upholds the ancient repute of the “Mitre” as a favourite house of entertainment. The staff, too, is as adequate and competent as of old. The *chef* has the reputation of being a veritable prince amongst professors of the culinary art, and has been aptly described as “the only man in England who knows how to cook a marrow-bone.” This succulent dainty, by the way, is a speciality of the house, and in preparing “devil-”ments generally it is

not surpassed by the sublimated kitchens of any of the great London hotels. The waiters are seemingly as ubiquitous as in the days of the well-known "George"; and of the wines it is sufficient to add that Mr. Foster is one of the best judges of port and champagne in the wine-adoring city. On that gentleman acquiring the "Mitre," its interior aspect was to a large extent modernized, while its unpretentious frontage in the prettily irregular High Street, with its little windows peeping behind a shady network of creepers, its old and massive gateway leading to its courtyard and commodious stabling, wear the old-time aspect which was familiar to its *habitués* of long ago. The smoke-room, too, is of the old school, whose surviving representatives are now so "few and far between" in this country. Its ancient-looking wainscoting, queer old hat-pegs, and quaint furniture, all belong to generations back. But, apart from this reminiscence, there is but little else about the furnishing of the coffee, dining, and bed-rooms which indicates the age and history of the house. Moritz, the German traveller, who visited Oxford in 1782, mentions this hotel in his book, "Travels through England." "At the 'Mitre,' the Inn where I lodged, there was hardly a minute in which some student or other did not call" "I there found prince-like attendance," &c. ; a more recent work, entitled "The noted Breweries of Great Britain and Ireland" contains a paragraph about the Hotel, at which the author stayed while collecting facts concerning the local breweries, relating that "during the present century this Hotel has become the recognized resort of the wealthier class of undergraduates in the University, and many noblemen and gentlemen now holding high positions in the state, came occasionally to stay awhile at the old house wherein, years ago, they may have been chief actors in many a scene of revelry. There is a curious and comfortable old apartment, known as the 'Christ Church room,' still held sacred to members of 'the House,' as that celebrated college is styled. The Mitre finds especial favour in the eyes of the many Americans that visit Oxford during the summer months, who regard with almost reverence the old-world appearance of the building; while the home-like surroundings of its interior, together with the traditional excellence of the *cuisine* and service, leave nothing for the traveller to desire beyond the opportunity of revisiting old Oxford and its Mitre."

The present management claim that the "Mitre" is "one of the most economical first-class hotels in the United Kingdom," and we have every reason to understand that this is no perversion of fact. Those who expect to find within the "Mitre" the luxurious furniture of the huge

modern hotels of our great cities, with such accessorial fitments as the inevitable "lift," will be disappointed. But those who look for substantial comfort, with a spice in it of that delightful air of "the good old days," which is so enjoyable to the intelligent visitor who is more than a mere *gourmand*, together with the best of good cheer—the products of a superior *cuisine*, and of a well chosen and abundantly stocked cellar—will not, we venture to say, be disappointed: this from our own experience.

Having spoken thus far of the "Mitre" alone, let us now enquire into a few of the more interesting facts in

THE HISTORY OF OXFORD.*

Famed as a city and seat of learning long before its University was founded, it is alleged in Peshall's edition of *Anthony à Wood* that Memphric, king of the Britons, built the city in the remote 1009th year A.C., and called it *Caer Memphric*. It was in later years named *Belle-situm*, or *Bello-situm*, *Ridchen*, or *Ryd-ychen*, which implies in the Celtic language a Ford of Oxen, which is now to be traced about a quarter of a mile west of the city. When the Saxons over-ran the Kingdom in A.D. 689, the Celtic name was perpetuated in *Oxeneford*, which comes nearer its present name of Oxford. During the reigns of the Saxon kings, the city was the residence of Alfred the Great and his three sons, and to this monarch is given the credit of having caused Oxford to become a seat of learning. Since the days of King Alfred, Oxford has, at all events, been regarded as one of the most important centres of thought and learning in this country. Important schools existed at Oxford from the time of the Conquest, but there is no substantial evidence to indicate that it was a University town before the reign of Henry II.

The city has had its fair share of warfare. It received its baptism of fire from the Danes, who burnt it in the year 979, repeating the spoliation again in 1032. Four years later Harold Harefoot was crowned there; and it played its part in the turmoil which succeeded the conquest of 1066. There still remain many interesting relics of the fortifications which formerly surrounded the city. The New Road now cuts through the outer "bailey" of what was Oxford Castle, and an old tower of a similar edifice built in the time of the Conqueror remains an interesting relic. Some "bits" of the old city walls,

* The illustrations are reproduced by permission from "ALDEN'S OXFORD GUIDE," from which the following information is chiefly derived.

originally built in the reign of Henry III, with the staircases from the alure to the towers, may yet be found, and the observant antiquarian may trace the lines of the walls through various parts of the town, to the old gates of the city, of which there were four. We give an illustration of St. Michael's Church and "Bocardo" or gate-house, where the three martyred prelates were allowed to take their meals in the room above the arch. It was from this gate they passed to their death by fire, which took place just outside the city wall, opposite the present entrance to Balliol College. The arch is not now in existence, but the site is in many respects a most interesting one.



ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH AND BOCARDO, NORTH GATE.

To perhaps nine-tenths of the visitors to Oxford the chief attractions will be

THE COLLEGES AND HALLS.

All Souls College was founded in 1438. It is styled in the charter, "The College of all the souls of the faithful departed, and especially of the souls of Henry V, King of England and France, and of the faithful subjects of the realm who died in the French wars." Its quadrangle contains all its original features; and on the north side stands the chapel, of which perhaps the crowning glory is its remarkable reredos, which remained for two centuries walled up

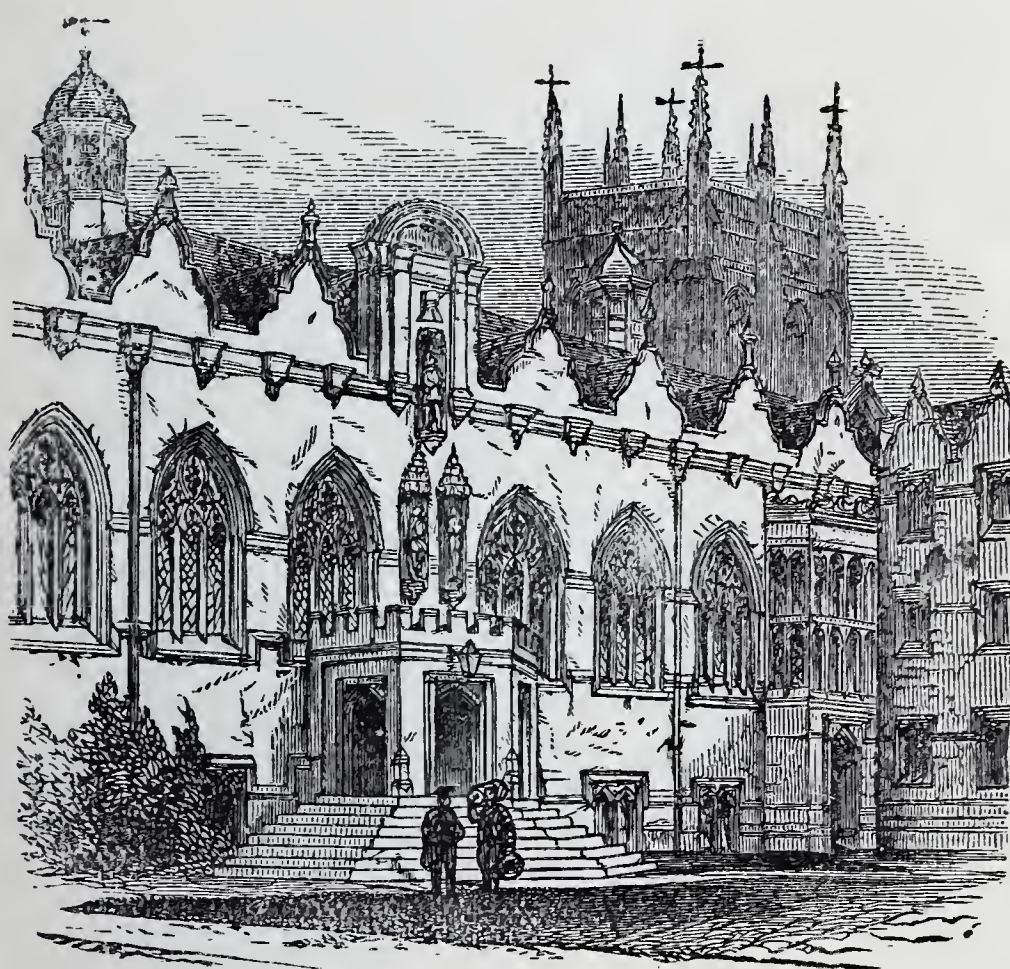
and concealed by lath and plaster, until, during a restoration, it was brought to light, and, though much dilapidated, was successfully completed at the expense of Earl Bathurst, the late Senior Fellow of the college, and under the superintendence of the late Sir Gilbert Scott. Balliol College was founded between 1260 and 1269 by Sir John de Balliol, father of the Scottish King of that name, and it claims collegiate precedence of all others. It possesses a valuable library, an elegant chapel, and a handsome hall, while it is distinguished for



BRASENOSE COLLEGE AND RADCLIFFE CAMERA.

the unusually large number of successful students who issue from it. In time past these have included Southey the poet, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, Tunstall, and the "Man of Ross" immortalised by Pope. Brasenose College dates from 1509, and the present buildings occupy the site of four ancient halls, one of which derived the name, now perpetuated by the College, from its being built on ground previously occupied by a *brasen-hus* or brew-house. The gateway tower is one of the finest structures of its kind in Oxford. Bishops Miles and

Heber, Dean Milman, and John Foxe have been numbered amongst the eminent members of Brasenose. Near at hand is St. Mary Hall, occupying the site of the ancient parsonage of St. Mary-the-Virgin, presented by King Edward II. to Oriel College, by which society it was converted into a separate place of education in 1337. It was here that Sir Thomas More and George Sandys the poet studied. Adjoining this Hall is Oriel College, its parent Society, founded in 1326 by Edward II., and incorporated in 1603 by James I. Amongst the distinguished names to be found on its books are those of Sir Walter Raleigh, Cardinal Newman, Archbishop Whately, Bishops Butler, Hampden, and



DINING HALL, ORIEL COLLEGE.

Wilberforce, John Keble and Dr. Pusey. Opposite Oriel is Canterbury Gate, a lofty arch with fluted Doric columns, built by Wyatt in 1778. Keble College was founded by subscription in memory of the author of the *Christian Year*, and was opened by Lord Salisbury in 1870. The hall contains a fine portrait of Keble, and the chapel Holman Hunt's great picture, *The Light of the World*. New College was founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and the buildings of the first quadrangle still remain as they were originally. It has some fine cloisters, a rare old bell tower, and a

chapel, whose great window was painted in 1777 by Jervais, from designs by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The choir possesses several fine windows, containing some of the original stained glass, while others of them are supposed to have been designed by students of Rubens. The late Sir Gilbert Scott was entrusted with the restoration of the chapel, and a handsome oak roof now replaces the old plaster ceiling, and much of the miscellaneous carved work is very fine. A relic preserved in the north-east corner of the chapel is the Founder's crozier, a pastoral staff in silver gilt, curiously enamelled with jewels, and of



ALL SOULS COLLEGE AND ST. MARY'S CHURCH.

superb workmanship. The library and hall are worth visiting, and the gardens are most charming in summer.

Another fine old academical edifice is St. Mary Magdalen College, which was founded by William Waynflete in 1458. Its most imposing architectural feature is its tower, which is 150 feet high, and has a fine peal of musical bells. A curious old open-air pulpit is to be found in the first quadrangle, and the west doorway is of remarkably fine design. It contains statues of St. John the Baptist, St. Mary Magdalen, St. Swithun, Edward IV., and the founder. The Great Gate has also

some fine statues, including those of St. John and Henry III. The chapel, cloisters, and dining-hall are most interesting and quaint. The water walks by the side of the Cherwell are charmingly sequestered, and form, as Anthony à Wood has put it, “pleasant meanders shadowed with trees,” and “as delectable as the banks of the Eurotas, where Apollo himself was wont to walk and sing his lays.” We



ADDISON'S WALK.

illustrate one of those beautiful avenues, known as Addison's Walk, where the distinguished author of *Sir Roger de Coverley* frequently regaled himself during his Oxford days. Very venerable in appearance, though of less ancient date than the edifice just mentioned, is University College, erected well on in the seventeenth century, and occupying the

site, it is believed, of a University Hall, of which tradition credits Alfred the Great with being the founder. Corpus Christi College is another fine foundation, and owes its origin to Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, and keeper of the Privy Seal to Henry VII. and Henry VIII., who dedicated it "to the honour of the most precious Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, of His most spotless Mother, and of all the Saints Patrons of the Cathedral Churches of Westminster, Durham, Bath and Wells, and Exeter." Amongst the interesting features of this college are the chapel, with a fine altar-piece representing the Adoration by Rubens; and the library, containing some priceless tomes and MSS. Bishop Fox's crozier is here, too, in excellent preservation, though three centuries old. Hooker the "judicious," and Bishop Jewell the "learned," were undergraduates of Corpus Christi, and here it was that Keble, who had been elected to a scholarship, took a "double first" at his final examination. Merton College disputes with Balliol for priority of foundation, and had Wycliffe for one of its most distinguished scholars. Its chapel is probably one of the most archæologically interesting in all Oxford, and the college will repay a complete day's examination to itself.

Christ Church Hall, of all our mediæval halls the grandest, Westminster Hall alone excepted, will bear a careful inspection. Its walls are adorned with portraits of its distinguished foundationers, by Vandyke, Hogarth, Reynolds, Gainsborough, Kneller, Holbein, and other masters. Here it was that Charles I. assembled those members of his Parliament who remained faithful to him in his extremities. Henry VIII. was banqueted here in 1533; and the venerable hall was utilised for dramatic representations before Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. The great quadrangle is the largest in Oxford; and the library is rich in specimens of the early Italian painters. Its chapel is at the same time the Cathedral of the diocese, and dates back to early Saxon times. It is built in a mixed Norman and early English style, and its spire is one of the most ancient in England.

Worcester College was founded in 1283 by the Baron of Brimesfield, and intended originally for Benedictine monks from Gloucester. It possesses a fine hall, a library with a valuable collection of books, and some very pleasant gardens. Wycliffe Hall is a theological institution of recent date, and Lady Margaret Hall has been established for ladies; but like Somerville College, they are not incorporated. St. John's College, originally a Cistercian monastery, was converted into an academical institution by Archbishop Chichele in 1436. Its library contains some interesting relics of Laud, and many ecclesiastical treasures. Trinity

College, within easy reach of St. John's, was founded in 1554 by Sir Thomas Pope, friend of Sir Thomas More, and member of the Privy Council of Henry VIII. and Queen Mary. Among the scholars it has produced were Gellibrand the mathematician, Shaftesbury (the Earl of "Characteristics"), Sir John Denham, and in later times, Cardinal Newman. Exeter College, whose buildings bear various dates from 1316, has a magnificent chapel, one of Sir Gilbert Scott's triumphs, which is worthy of very careful inspection. Jesus College, designed ostensibly for Welsh students, and founded by Dr. Hugh Ap Rice in 1571, is the first college founded since the Reformation. Lincoln College dates back from 1427, and Wadham College—a curious architectural blend—from 1612. Hertford College has had many eminent men among its members—Sir Matthew Hale, Charles James Fox, and Tyndale, the early translator of the Bible, amongst them. Another of the later colleges is Pembroke. Its hall is one of the finest refectories in Oxford. St. Edmund Hall was founded 1226. Queen's College was founded by Queen Philippa's chaplain, "to the honour of God, the profit and furtherance of the church, and the salvation of souls," and also, be it added, "for the special benefit of Cumberland and Westmoreland." The altar-piece in the chapel is a copy of Correggio's "Night," and the library, containing more than 60,000 volumes, is one of the most extensive in the city. Its members have included many of our princes and most eminent men in poetry and theology. New Inn Hall, formerly known as Trilleck's Inn, was purchased by William of Wykeham in 1369, and conveyed to New College. During the civil war, Charles I. used this Inn as his mint. The Hall has now ceased to exist as a separate institution.

It is impossible to do anything approaching to justice in the brief space at our command to even an inexhaustive catalogue of the halls and colleges, and their rich plethora of historical and academic interest. It has been our aim rather to whet the appetite of our readers, and induce a desire to explore the vast archæological store-house which Oxford presents to the intelligent and thoughtful visitor. What we have said permits us only to make the briefest reference to the

OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST

in and around the Collegiate City. To many the Bodleian Library, which was founded by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, in 1445, and contains 1,250,000 works and 26,000 manuscripts, will be a source of inexhaustible delight. The University Museum, erected in 1855 at a

cost of £100,000, has been aptly described as being “about the most comprehensive and complete institution in the world for the teaching and study of the Natural Sciences.” Adjoining the museum is the Clarendon Laboratory for the study of experimental physics; and in the park is the Astronomical Observatory, erected by the University in 1874, and amply equipped for the study of physical astronomy. Oxford Town Hall has a public library of some 9,000 volumes. The Sheldonian Theatre, from the cupola of which a magnificent bird’s-eye view of Oxford may be obtained, was originally erected in 1664 by Gilbert Sheldon in order to avoid the use of a sacred building for purely secular



THE SHELDONIAN THEATRE.

purposes. Hard by is the old Ashmolean, once rich in historical and antiquarian relics (removed in 1894 to the University Galleries); the Divinity School, dating from 1445; the Convocation House, opened in 1640; the Clarendon Building, originally built for the use of the Clarendon Press, now located in a more extensive printing-house. The new Examination Schools for the University, opened in 1882, and erected at a cost of £100,000; the Botanic Gardens; the *Camera Bodleiana* or Radcliffe Library; the Taylor Institution, founded by the late Alderman Sir Robert Taylor, of London, “for the teaching and improving the European languages”; the Martyrs’ Memorial, one of Sir Gilbert Scott’s best works—these are amongst the

“lions” of Oxford, which should on no account be missed. Space fails to permit but a bare reference to the Churches of Oxford, almost as interesting, and in many cases as historical as its halls and colleges. St. Mary’s Church, with its quaint old fourteenth-century spire, and its magnificent porch, is indeed one of the sights of the city. Amongst the others, St. Peter’s-in-the-East, the Cathedral (already noticed), St. Aldate’s Church, St. Martin’s, St. Giles’, the Church of St. Mary Magdalen, St. Michael’s—its tower a fine Saxon structure—and the Church of St. Thomas-the-Martyr, are especially noteworthy.

The streets are not the least interesting feature of Oxford ; the High Street in particular is most picturesque, and one appreciative writer says respecting it, that “Antwerp may have quainter pieces, Edinburgh more striking blendings of art with nature, Paris and London may show grander *coups d’œil*, and there is architecture more picturesque in Nuremburg and Frankfort. But for stately beauty, that same broad curve of colleges, enhanced by many a spire and dome, and relieved by a background of rich foliage, is absolutely without parallel.” Again, the neighbourhood of Oxford abounds in charming spots for little excursions—Nuneham, Godstow, Kennington, Rose Island, the banks of the classic Isis, are only a few that run off the pen at first thought. But we are fain to believe with Hawthorne that “it is a despair to see such a place and ever to leave it ; for it would take a lifetime, and more than one, to comprehend and enjoy it satisfactorily.” Probably few old hostelries can boast such galore of all that is picturesque and historic as may be found within a three-mile radius “ROUND ABOUT THE ‘MITRE.’”

G. A. F.



DINE-ABOUT PAPERS: THE "MITRE," AT OXFORD.*

From the top of the Royal Defiance,
Jack Adams, who coaches so well,
Set me down in this region of science,
In front of the Mitre Hotel.
"Sure never man's prospects were brighter,"
Said I, as I jumped from my perch,
"So quickly arrived at the Mitre.
I'm sure to get on in the Church."
Old Coaching Song.

D*EUS mihi preteritos referat si Jupiter annos!* My early memories revert to the classic High of the exquisite city that has far better claims to be styled the Modern Athens than the pirnekety "toun" that has usurped that title. It was somewhat early in the forties that I, a fledging, first entered that glorious hostelry the Mitre, to witness the unedifying spectacle of the heir to an ancient baronetcy a trifle in his cups, though the sun was yet high in the autumn heaven. That was after the palmy days of "Black Will," the gentleman of colour, who was wont to tool the fastest coach in England to and from the Academic City between sunrise and sunset.

My earliest recollection of Oxonian whips stops short at Wignell, Glover, and that grand old man Colee, all of whom handled the ribands of the Cheltenham coach long after the railway whistle had blown off the road those hundreds of gay coaches that were wont to glorify the "High" in the good old days. To revert, however, to the Mitre—when first I endued my limbs fresh from cricket with that *toga virilis*, the serge gown, the Mitre was kept by Mr. Venables, whose factotum was that most astute of Mercuries, "George," since then elevated to the proprietorship of the Marlborough Arms, in the dull old town of Witney. As a freshman, I knew but little of the Apician repasts indulged in by Tufts and gentleman commoners, who considerately provided a band for the delectation of the "High," and hot coppers for the *gamins* whose covetousness exceeded their respect for their fingers. Then the Mitre was essentially a 'Varsity house, the "Star" being the county inn, wherein at a public dinner a few larky county magistrates filled the hat of Sadler, alderman and cook of the city, with pudding, and a gay baronet, after exercising the functions of high sheriff, danced on the table. *Apropos*, we boys at the Mitre were more proper than that, for the best of all possible reasons, because we dreaded the inroad of Ferriman, of All Souls, the good-humoured proctor who used

* Reprinted from "FACT."

to wink with one eye, while he tried to look grave with the other ; or "Brown" Holland, his colleague, who smole an evil smile as he sconced you a sovereign, and requested your presence in New College to pay that little sum the following morning. It was in front of the Mitre that some one of the Jacks-in-Office told handsome Lord Skelmersdale, now Lord Lathom, to put out his cigar ; and was met by the quiet rejoinder, that if he could not enjoy the luxury of the *herba nicotiana*, he would take his name off the books, a consummation at once effected ; and here about that period, if you had dropped in you would have found Lincoln, afterwards the ill-starred Duke of Newcastle, huge Johnny Malcolm, the two Fiennes, good fellows and good cricketers, Chandos Leigh, Jack Armitstead, or perhaps—who knows?—Tom Brassey, or Codrington, of B.N.C. Christ Church and Oriel were in those days the chief patrons of the Mitre, and I don't fancy the good old inn suffered much from proctorial interference. Greater days, however, were yet to dawn for this honest house. Does not Homer aphorise, "As the generations of leaves so are those of men"? A generation in Oxford lasts, be it known, but four short years ; and he who lingers by the banks of Isis for five or six years, gets to be eyed askance as a sort of academical Methuselah. Now it happened that the hard-reading generation which developed a double-first in the Marquis of Lothian passed away, to be succeeded by a rapider set. Hastings, he of the Marquisate, not the quiet young Dominus who now is known as Huntingdon, appeared on the scene like a comet ; whence followed Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, who rode well to hounds, but was kept in apple-pie order by General Bruce ; and soon after enter, if you please, His Grace of Hamilton and Brandon with poor Harrington. The Mitre then got very lively. You had to order a room for dinner several days in advance, and it required all the splendid tact of "George" to get the "waiter-chaps" to do their work. They gave you an excellent repast then, us also now—a bachelor's feed, mind you, fitted rather for Lucullus than Messalina, for the critical undergraduate's palate likes savouries and "devils." Here is a specimen *menu* :—

Asparagus Soup.
 Salmon. Fried Eels. Filleted Soles.
 Lobster Cutlets. Devilled Sweetbreads.
 Spatchcock Fowl, with Mushrooms.
 Neck of Venison.
 Ice Pudding.
 Marrow-bones on Toast.
 Fondu of Cheese.

This probably was washed down with bitters, hock, sherry, moselle, or champagne, claret, cups of some sort, curaçao, and port, the grand total being completed with coffee and anchovy toast, cigars, and perhaps a nip of cognac. A feed of this variety cost money, but it did not infringe fatally upon the resources of such men as Hamilton or Harrington, the Brasseys, Tankerville Chamberlayne, Tufton, or others easily named. The error was when Pluticulus tried to ape Plutus, when because a man wore a Bullingdon ribbon he felt it incumbent upon him to plunge not only *qua* gastronomy but *qua* pasteboard. Certes, these Mitre dinners, moralising apart, were jovial affairs. You must not

compare them with the twenty-four courses *de rigueur* at Greenwich, still less with the refined banquets of my friend Apicius, who cannot bring himself to believe that he has dined without an ortolan. Gastronomically, however, these repasts were by no means despicable. Mrs. Venables never admitted to her larder or cellar any element of discord. You were never poisoned by made dishes concocted with imitation butter; the meat was so magnificent that "Mitre" beef has become a proverb; above all, as *Alma Mater* loves the vintages of Oporto, the Venables were more than fortunate in buying up the cellar of a local brewer named Morrell on the decease of that *connoisseur* of port. Probably the Morrell port of '47 and '51 has ere now been consumed, but in the bright days of the sixties it formed not the least of the Mitre attractions.

The old Inn, with its charming irregularity and rare cosiness, has held its own right bravely. It competes advantageously with the grandiose Randolph and sublimated Star—they call it "Clarendon," "Star" being too inferior for civic Oxford—and has outlived a really beautiful hotel of past days, "The Angel." It is clearly, too, a case of the survival of the fittest, for of all hostelries this has bid successfully for academical support solely by giving good money's worth for good money—an honest principle. Not vainly did an undergraduate of Swinburnian, agnostic, communistic proclivities prophesy that of all Mitres this would last the longest. Without disrespect to the bench of bishops I may pray that both species of Mitre may continue, the one to comfort the souls, the other the bodies, of the Gentlemen of England.

GOURMET.



OXFORD.

“MITRE”



HOTEL.

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OXFORD.

“MITRE”



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